

Sif

Sif was a Norse goddess and wife of the warrior god Thor. She was the goddess of wheat, fertility and family. The two main texts that depict Sif are the Poetic Edda and the Prose Edda, some of the best known traditional sources on Norse mythology. She is described as a beautiful woman with hair that was as golden as the sun. Her name means “relation to marriage” and she was associated with family caregiving and fertility.

Thor treasured his wife’s hair and would often boast of it whenever given the opportunity. Loki knew this and in an effort to upset the god, he chopped off Sif’s hair. Sif was left nearly bald and when she awoke, she found her hair in piles around her. She burst into tears and they fell onto the ground below, flooding the crop fields that she would protect.

Thor called for his wife but was unable to find her. After searching, he finally heard her whisper his name. She declared that she was ashamed and needed to leave the home of the gods and go into hiding. She then let her husband see her and he was immediately struck with sadness for his wife’s suffering.

Thor approached the other gods, demanding that they tell him who did this to his wife. Odin, the chief of the gods, suggested that it was Loki, as no one else had enough mischief in them to do such a thing. Odin called Loki, only after he commanded Thor to not harm him.

Loki admitted to the crime and the gods demanded he find a way to make amends. Loki left to find a way to give Sif her hair back. He traveled to the center of the earth to visit the Gnomes, who were known for their handiwork. He asked them to make a cap of floor-length hair that would match Sif’s hair. The Gnomes worked for days but eventually they presented the cap to Loki, which sported long golden locks as soft as silk made from gold thread.

He brought it to Sif, who put it on. It fit perfectly and gave her back her hair that she had missed so terribly. She was once again happy and was able to help the Norse with their crops once again.